



# Property management Q&A

## Your property management questions answered

**Our property management experts are on hand to answer any queries you may have regarding management and maintenance of your investment property. Email your questions to [editor@yipmag.com.au](mailto:editor@yipmag.com.au)**

### ROOKIE PROPERTY MANAGERS

**Q** I just hired one of the bigger agencies to manage my unit in the Upper North Shore. My property was located in a nice part of the suburb and very close to everything. It's also a really nice property and in a quiet neighbourhood and building. So I know I won't have any issues attracting any tenant.

During the first opening weekend, I went in just to see how the open house was going. To my dismay, the property agent whom I signed the contract with sent on her behalf a teenager to show my place around. She was so disinterested in the whole process and ignored the people who walked in. I ended up talking to the potential tenants, showing them around, and answering their questions.

The unit was rented out that weekend, but it left me disappointed that the management company sent out their most junior person to manage the most important part of securing tenants for my property. Is this normal?

**A** I feel a little disappointed for you myself. If that is the person who is going to fill the shoes of your property manager, then that would make me wonder if this would happen if your tenant was to call the agent with a concern when the property manager was not available to take the call. Would this 'fill-in' ignore your tenant again, just as they did at the open home?

I would also ask the property manager: did they carelessly throw the keys to the property at this junior and instruct them to just "go show this property"? This was all the junior seemed to do.



This experience is definitely not common practice. Personally, I like to be present every chance I get because I am a strong believer that first impressions are the most important and the property manager needs to know their tenant.

If the property manager is unwell or on leave, they should ensure that whoever is representing them should be fully trained in this environment. This junior seems poorly trained, or they are a shadow of their property manager themselves.

Pass on a short letter/email outlining your experience, with a copy to the licensee director of the agency, because you definitely do not want your entire tenancy managed in the same manner.

– Nicole Keene

**A** What can I say? This seems typical of a standard real estate office that runs property management as an add-on to their sales department.

When employing an agent, I personally want to see their results and have one point of contact when renting out my properties. I don't want to hear from a junior, an administrative PA, or a property manager telling me I need to spend money on repairs.

You are employing someone to look after your investment, and to leave what could be a \$500,000-plus asset solely in the hands of an amateur creates room for error with routine inspections and the day-to-day management of your property.

Over the last 10 years, I have seen offices with a revolving door of juniors because they are cheaper for the offices, and I have also seen good offices with property managers who have been in the same job for 10 years, and the latter is more attractive as you need a top performer to get you top results in your investing.

It is imperative that the agent should manage your property correctly, for example rent increases. Otherwise, it may cost you thousands of dollars a year in missed profits, as well as the unnecessary stress of shonky tenant selection or more regular expenses for property repairs.

The reality is that someone with more experience has seen the good, the bad and the ugly, and should be a better judge of character. However, the leasing officer junior who presented your property could also be very experienced and have your interest at heart, and age shouldn't be a restraint. What's important is to make sure you have a professional offering you a professional service and getting you the best outcome.

– Nathan Birch

### The experts



#### Nicole Keene

Nicole Keene is property manager at Blink Property. Nicole has almost a decade of property management experience and specialises in proactively managing investment properties. Nicole has recently joined the Blink Property team, part of the [binvested.com.au](http://binvested.com.au) group of companies.



#### Nathan Birch

Nathan Birch is a well-regarded property investment expert. A prolific property investor himself, Nathan is well known for his simple yet effective investment strategies. At just 27, he personally owns a portfolio of more than 72 properties. Nathan Birch is the co-founder of the [binvested.com.au](http://binvested.com.au) group of companies.